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Cassis: Michigan's economic situation is serious, this is not a time for games

LANSING – A joint meeting of the Senate Finance Committee and the House Tax Policy Committee Wednesday ended abruptly when House Democrats, in a surprise move, motioned to approve the governor's Single Business Tax restructuring plan, effectively ending debate and precluding further testimony from scheduled participants, said state Sen. Nancy Cassis, chair of the Senate Finance Committee.

All joint meetings of the two committees have been expressly for the purpose of taking testimony. It was never the intention of either committee to vote on the measures during the joint hearings, according to Cassis.

"Michigan's economic situation is serious," said Cassis, R-Novi. "We have the highest unemployment rate in the nation and businesses are leaving our state.

"We had an opportunity to hear today from businesses that would be affected by the governor's plan and to hear first hand how the shifts in the plan would affect jobs and business growth. Because of some misplaced political acrobatics voices were stifled. This is not a time for games – this is a time for real leadership focused on turning our state around. Taxpayers deserve nothing less.

"Unfortunately, actions taken today eroded the spirit of bipartisanship that has pervaded these hearings. This was a deliberate attempt to hijack the committee process even before all those who came to testify could be heard."

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